Los Alamos National Laboratory captures eight NNSA Pollution Prevention awards

April 15, 2009

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, April 15, 2009—Los Alamos National Laboratory employee teams and organizations earned eight 2009 Pollution Prevention awards from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). The awards are based on an NNSA-wide competition that acknowledges pollution prevention, recycling, and affirmative procurement accomplishments.

The Laboratory also received a Department of Energy “E Star” award for its Environmental Management System project, based on a complexwide competition.

"These projects represent another example of the commitment of Lab staff to eliminate waste and invoke cost-effective process improvements," said Denny Hjeresen of the Laboratory’s Risk Reduction Office.

The Lab received five Environmental Stewardship awards and three Best-in-Class awards from NNSA. Employees on the winning project teams will be recognized at a ceremony later this year. These employees will be verbally recognized at the Lab's Pollution Prevention Awards ceremony April 22 in the Physics Building Auditorium.
Environmental Stewardship awards

- Downsizing and rightsizing the Laboratory's vehicle fleet (Alternative Fuel and Fuel Conservation in Transportation category). Cost savings for fiscal year 2008 totaled $156,000, and the projected cost saving for fiscal year 2009 is an additional $224,000.
- A Green Synthesis Path to Diaminoazoxyfurazan. (Waste/Pollution Prevention category). Replacing the original synthesis path to diaminoazoxyfurazan, an explosive, with an environmentally friendly alternative improved process time by 90 percent as well as the purity of the final product. It also maintains a high yield and generates no hazardous waste.
- LED Replacement Lights for Glove Boxes are Safe and Cost Effective (Waste/Pollution Prevention category). Replacing about 90 fluorescent light fixtures in glove boxes with LED lights each year will lead to an expected annual savings of more than $32,600, which includes energy costs, purchasing, and waste disposal.
- Extending Reuse Period of Anti-C Lab Coats at the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Facility (Waste/Pollution Prevention category). Time and effort saved by extending the wear time of lab coats is about the equivalent of one full-time employee per year.
- Remediation and Waste Minimization (Waste/Pollution Prevention category). Segregating and reusing about 2,420 cubic yards of clean soil as backfill material eliminated the need for this material to be processed as low-level waste and avoided more than $2 million in storage, transportation, and disposal costs.

Best-in-Class awards

- Server Virtualization Results in Continual Cost and Energy Savings (Electronics Stewardship category). The Lab's Server Administration and Operations team reduced the number of computer servers from 200 to 12, saving an estimated 873,000 kilowatt-hours per year in energy savings. This project saved $605,000 in the first year and expects to avoid about $1.4 million annually.
- Using a Mature Environmental Management System (EMS) for Meaningful Institutional Improvements (Environmental Management Systems category). The Laboratory is using its ISO 14001 certified Environmental Management System to systematically improve environmental performance across the Laboratory.
- In fiscal years 2006-2008, overall estimated savings to the Lab from EMS related projects is $18.4 million.
- Muon Tomography Waste and Disposal (Waste/Pollution Prevention category). By implementing pollution prevention techniques, this employee team was able to reduce waste at the Lab's Muon Tomography Project. Due to pollution prevention planning prior to the project, 20,000 kilograms of hazardous waste is avoided annually. This effort saved an estimated $865,977 in waste disposal costs, minimized worker exposure to hazardous chemicals, and reduced labor costs.